

REMARKS

Claims 1 and 3-20 are currently pending in this application. Please consider the foregoing amendments and the following remarks prior to first examination pursuant to the RCE of this application.

The Rejections

Claims 1 and 3-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph due to the Examiner's assertion that a plurality of telephones is not supported by Applicant's specification. Claims 1 and 3-20 were provisionally rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obvious type double patenting in view of the claims of 08/847,921. Claims 1-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,884,262 of Wise et al. (Wise). Applicant assumes that was an error in that claim 2 was cancelled without prejudice in Amendment B, and will therefore assume that this rejection is of claims 1 and 3-20.

The rejection under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph

Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection in that a plurality of telephones is clearly supported by the Applicant. For example, multiple telephone lines are shown in Fig. 2, and multiple telephones are shown in Fig. 12. In fact, the ability to service multiple telephones is fundamental to the present invention, which allows anyone with a telephone to access Internet services over the public telephone system. This rejection should be withdrawn.

The provisional rejection of obvious type double patenting

Applicant notes that the claims of U.S.S.N. 08/847,921 have not yet been granted, and that the claims have been modified since the time of the Examiner's rejection. Applicant submits that the time for an obvious type double patenting rejection

is not yet ripe, and requests the withdrawal of this provisional rejection when Applicant's claims are found to be otherwise allowable.

The Cited Art

Wise teaches a computer document audio access and conversion system that allows a user to access information originally formatted for audio/visual interfacing on a computer network via a simple telephone. Files formatted specifically for audio interfacing can also be accessed by the system. A user can call a designated telephone number and request a file via dual-tone multi-frequency (DTMF) signaling or through voice commands. The system analyzes the request and accesses a predetermined document. The document may be in a standard document file format, such as hyper-text mark-up language (HTML) which is used on the World Wide Web. The document is analyzed by the system, and depending on the different types of formats used in the document, information is translated from an audio/visual format to an audio format and played to the user via the telephone interface. The document may contain links to other documents which can be invoked to access such other documents. In addition, the system can have a native command capability which allows the system to act independently of the accessed document contents to replay a document or carry out functions similar to those available in conventional web browsers.

The Cited Art Distinguished

Wise teaches a private access system working with a finite set of known users (or at least, known user telephones). The present invention is directed to the use of a plurality of telephones which can utilize the public telephone system (defined as including at least one telephone switch office) to access the Internet through an auditory interface.

There are many indications that Wise is teaching a private exchange or PBX system which is not to be accessed remotely by one or more unknown telephones over a public telephone system including one or more telephone switch offices. For one, the examples given are those of a private PBX network. For another, Wise always speaks of users in the singular, implying that the PBX is not operating as an Internet server but,

rather, as a PBX. For yet another, Wise does not teach the requirement of utilizing a security system utilizing a password to grant access to the functionality of the system (only to specified files). This is because, with Wise, the user (or at least the user telephone) is known, unlike Applicant's system where anyone anywhere in the world connected to the public telephone system can connect to the access computer and, therefore, a password security system is required.

Applicant specifically traverses the Examiner's assertion that Wise teaches a plurality of telephones that may be used simultaneously for individual Internet interaction. Figure 4 of Wise, instead, teaches long-distance telephony between two telephones utilizing the Internet as a transmission medium, and is completely silent as to web browsing, e-mail retrieval, etc. Further, column 9, lines 56-65 of Wise does not teach the creation of web pages via a telephone interface but, rather, the ability to search the WWW with a network search engine. Finally, Wise does not teach the verification of a user's identity (such as by a password) before allowing him to retrieve e-mail. With the invention of Wise, anyone with knowledge of the file location can retrieve anyone's e-mail. Wise lacks security because Wise does not contemplate a publicly accessed system.


In view of the forgoing, the rejection of claims 1 and 3-20 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) in view of Wise should be withdrawn. Applicant reserves the right at a future date to swear behind Wise, but does not believe it to be necessary in view of the preceding remarks.

Conclusion

All claims being patentable, the Examiner is requested to withdraw all rejections of the claims and to allow the case to issue.

If in the opinion of the Examiner, a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of the subject application, the Examiner is encouraged to call the undersigned at (650) 838-4443.

Respectfully submitted,
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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

1. (thrice amended) A voice web browser system comprising:

a plurality of touch-tone telephones capable of producing DTMF signals;

[an] a remote access system coupled to a TCP/IP network, said TCP/IP network comprising a plurality of nodes, said TCP/IP network providing access to web pages stored on computer systems coupled to said TCP/IP network, said web pages comprising HTML code that can be transmitted via TCP/IP packets to said access system over said TCP/IP network, said access system being able to receive said TCP/IP packets and to parse said HTML code into text and non-text portions;

a public telephone system coupling said plurality of telephones to said access system for interactive communication with said access system through one or more telephone switch offices such that said DTMF signals can be used to navigate among said web pages to a selected web page for a plurality of users of said plurality of telephones after a user of a touch-tone telephone is granted permission to use such functionality; [and]

a security system requiring at least a password to grant said user permission;
and

a text-to-speech system associated with said access system for reading at least some of said text portions to at least one of said plurality of users of said selected web page.

3. (once amended) A voice web browser system as recited in claim 1 further comprising a speech recognition system responsive to spoken commands from said telephone users and operative to provide operational commands to said access system.

4. A voice web browser system as recited in claim 1 wherein said access system consists of a unitary computer system.

5. (once amended) A voice web browser system as recited in claim 1 wherein said access system comprises an interface computer system coupled to said plurality of telephone users by said telephone system, and a server coupling said interface computer to said TCP/IP network.

6. (once amended) A voice web browser system as recited in claim 1 wherein said access system is responsive to commands from said plurality of telephone users for navigating both within web pages and between web pages of said TCP/IP network.

7. (thrice amended) A computer implemented process for obtaining web page information over a TCP/IP network comprising:

implementing a connection of a plurality of touch-tone telephone users via a public telephone system including at least one telephone switch office to an access system that is coupled to a TCP/IP network;

requiring at least a password to grant a user of a touch tone telephone permission utilize the functionality of said access system;

detecting a selection of navigation commands by DTMF signals made by said telephone users to access web pages accessible over said TCP/IP network; and

navigating over said TCP/IP network to said web pages in response to said navigation command, resulting in verbal communication of at least some information derivable from said web pages to said plurality of telephone users over said touch-tone telephones.

8. (once amended) A computer implemented process as recited in claim 7 further comprising making initial verbal contacts with said plurality of telephone users after implementing a connection.

9. (once amended) A computer implemented process as recited in claim 8 wherein said initial verbal contacts include providing a plurality of options to the plurality of telephone users.

10. A computer implemented process as recited in claim 9 wherein said plurality of options includes navigating the TCP/IP network and the sending or receiving of e-mail.

11. A computer implemented process as recited in claim 10 wherein said plurality of options further includes creating a web page on said TCP/IP network.

12. A computer readable media encoded with the computer implemented process of claim 7.

13. (twice amended) A voice web browser comprising:

connection means including a public telephone system including at least one telephone switch office for implementing connections of a plurality of touch-tone telephone users to an access system that is coupled to a TCP/IP network;

means requiring at least a password to grant a user of a touch tone telephone permission utilize the functionality of said access system;

means for detecting a selection of navigation commands in the form of a DTMF signal by said telephone users to access web pages accessible over said TCP/IP network; and

means for navigating over said TCP/IP network to said web pages in response to said navigation commands, resulting in a verbal communication of at least some information derivable from said web pages to said plurality of telephone users.

14. (once amended) A voice web browser as recited in claim 13 further comprising means for making initial verbal contacts with said plurality of telephone users after implementing said connections.

15. (once amended) A voice web browser as recited in claim 14 wherein said means for making initial verbal contacts includes means for providing a plurality of options to the telephone users.

16. A voice web browser as recited in claim 12 further comprising means for creating a web page accessible via said TCP/IP network.

17. (amended) A method for retrieving e-mail that was sent over a TCP/IP network comprising:

calling from a user touch-tone telephone via a public telephone system including at least one telephone switch office to an access computer coupled to a TCP/IP network;

providing at least one of a user identification and a password to said access computer by at least one of user ID, voice communication, and DTMF signals;

retrieving e-mail via said access computer that was sent over said TCP/IP network and addressed to said user; and

reading said e-mail to said user of said user telephone utilizing a text-to-speech system.

18. A method for retrieving e-mail as recited in claim 17 further comprising providing at least one command to said access computer via a DTMF signal developed by said user telephone.

19. A computer readable media encoded with software instructions and data to implement the method of claim 17.

20. (amended) A system for retrieving e-mail that was sent over a TCP/IP network comprising:

an access computer means coupled to a TCP/IP network, said access computer means being accessible by a user via a user touch-tone telephone which communicates with said access computer means via a public telephone system including at least one telephone switch office;

DTMF [signal means] signals for providing at least one of user identification and a password to said access computer means;

means for retrieving e-mail via said access computer means that was sent over said TCP/IP network and addressed to said user; and

means for reading said e-mail to said user of said user telephone.